



**Department of  
Agriculture  
Republic of South Africa**

The Director  
Directorate of Animal Health  
Private Bag X138  
Pretoria 0001

Reference: 14/1/B

20-Oct-97:

Dr. Joan M Arnoldi  
Deputy Administrator - Veterinary Services  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Washington DC  
20250

Dear Dr. Arnoldi

**THE BSE AND SCRAPIE STATUS OF SOUTH AFRICA**

With reference to your letter dated 31 March 1997 to Dr. Bosman, it is my pleasure to provide answers to the questions posed:

1. Yes - scrapie is compulsory notifiable in South Africa.
2. All brain material presented to our reference laboratory in South Africa is screened histopathologically for scrapie. This measure was instituted in 1986. All examinations are done by specialist histopathologists in the full time employ of our Agricultural Research Council. The laboratory is able to perform immunohistochemical examinations as well (the reagents were obtained from the Netherlands in 1996), but this is not performed on a routine basis. Immunohistochemistry will be done on any positive or suspected specimens, and the opinion of world authorities will also be solicited if suspected specimens are found. Scrapie (and BSE) does not occur in South Africa and no suspected specimens has been identified since 1986. The laboratory examined material from approximately 900 small stock submissions per year, and of approximately 750 cattle submissions per year since 1986. (Not all of these samples included brain material, but all brain specimens received for which no other diagnosis could be made, was screened.) Samples included samples submitted for rabies in cases which were negative for rabies (therefore included samples from animals presented with nervous signs which were not due to rabies).
3. Sheep 27 616 488, goats 6 545 971
4. Please find the document "History of Scrapie in South Africa" attached. Scrapie was introduced into South Africa in 1967. We followed a strict trace and stamping out policy, and the disease was eradicated in 1972. We do not allow the importation of sheep and goat products from countries where scrapie exist. Imports of live animals from scrapie positive countries was subject to a 4 year quarantine. No cases of scrapie were diagnosed in South Africa over the past 25 years - despite a monitoring program in place since 1986
5. The disease does not occur in South Africa. If it were to be diagnosed in a flock, the whole flock and all other flocks to which animals from the infected

**Enquires: Dr. J J Theron**

flock were known to have moved, would be slaughtered. Importation of live animals and meat products from scrapie positive countries is not allowed. The Animal Health Act, 35 of 1984, was provided to you earlier this year when we made a similar presentation to you about our foot and mouth free zone, which was recognised more than a year before you requested the details by the OIE. Please let me know how many copies of the act you want if you need another copy of the Act.

6. Yes. Sheep and goat importation's (and semen and embryos) are only allowed from New Zealand and Australia. Importation from other countries would only be considered based on a 5 year quarantine scheme. A copy of our Animal Health Act (Act 35 of 1984), is attached for your information. Laws and regulations relevant to Importation is contained in Section 6. You will note that this section place the conditions under which imports may take place under the discretion and authority of the Director: Animal Health. **Annex A** is an example of a draft permit for the importation of small stock from countries not recognised to be free of scrapie. It also contains guidelines for scrapie assurance quarantine programmes.
7. Yes. The restrictions for semen and embryos of sheep and goats is the same as for live animals.
8. We allow the importation of sheep, goats and goat embryos from Australia and New Zealand. The last import of small stock from countries where scrapie occurs took place in 1992.
9. Yes. We have a total ban on the importation of live animals from countries which reported cases of BSE in animals which were not imported. This was instituted after a Consensus decision made at the Southern African Development Community, the co-operative forum for Southern African States. The ban was implemented in November 1996

10.

	Total	Male	Female	Not recorded
UK '85 - '96	76	26	37	13

	<i>France</i>	<i>Holland</i>	<i>Switzerland</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Ireland</i>
1985	58				
1986				13	
1987	28	1		3	
1988	90			208	38
1989			1	69	
1990	1		4	5	
1991	5		6	4	
1992		4			
1993		5			
1994				66	
1995	5	5	1	58	
1996	10		13	2	
Total:	15	5	14	126	38

Information for the years before 1985 is not readily available.

11. We do not allow the importation of Bovine Embryos from the United Kingdom. Importation from countries with a low incidence of BSE is allowed but records of offspring and their locality is kept by the relevant stud breeders societies, and the health status of such animals are monitored annually by state veterinarians. This scheme was instituted in 1997.
12. No. Bovine semen importation was suspended for 9 months from BSE positive countries as from April 1996, but this ban was lifted when the OIE guidelines made it clear that no risk can be attributed to semen from healthy bulls. The following measures concerning BSE are in place to ensure that bulls donating semen for the South African market is safe:
  - 1) Bulls must originate from a country free from BSE; or
  - 2) in the case of a BSE infected country:- BSE is compulsorily notifiable and where affected cattle are slaughtered and completely destroyed.
  - 3) Bulls must originate from a country where the feeding of specified (OIE Animal Health Code par 3.2.13.7) protein products, derived from ruminants over 6 months of age to cattle has been banned.
  - 4) Semen must be derived from donor bulls which:
    - a) were born after the institution of the ruminant feed ban;
    - b) are not affected with BSE;
    - c) are not the sons of BSE affected females;
    - d) were not suspected of being affected with BSE at the time of semen collection.
13. Yes. Meat and bone meal importation derived from cattle, sheep or goats is allowed only from Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe. Strict control over the inclusion of products from cattle, sheep and goat origin is exercised even for pet food to be imported into South Africa
14. These figures are not available. No rendered animal protein containing material of sheep, goat or cattle origin was imported legally from any country other than those listed above.
15. No
16. No
17. All brain material presented to our reference laboratory in South Africa is screened histopathologically for BSE. This measure was instituted in 1986. All examinations are done by specialist histopathologists in the full time employ of our Agricultural Research Council. The laboratory is able to perform immunohistochemical examinations as well (the reagents were obtained from the Netherlands in 1996), but this is not performed on a routine basis. Immunohistochemistry will be done on any positive or suspected specimens, and the opinion of world authorities will also be solicited if suspected specimens are found. Scrapie (and BSE) does not occur in South Africa and no suspected specimens has been identified since 1986. The laboratory examined material from approximately 900 small stock submissions , and of approximately 750 cattle submissions per year since 1986. (We are in the process of extracting more exact data about the ages, symptoms and sections examined for these animals from our records. Not all of these samples included brain material, but all brain specimens received for which no other diagnosis could be made, was screened.) Samples included samples

October 20, 1997

submitted for rabies in cases which were negative for rabies (therefore included samples from animals presented with nervous signs which were not due to rabies.

18. Cattle samples received at reference laboratory where all samples which are suitable were screened are as follows:


1986	750
1987	776
1988	732
1989	794
1990	750
1991	737
1992	978
1993	896
1994	802
1995	902
1996	

These samples did not all include material suitable for BSE examination. All submissions which included suitable material, were in cases where the etiology could not be ascertained, subjected to examination specifically for Spongiform encephalopathy, with negative results.

19. Cattle = 11 379 329
20. No Transmissible encephalopathy, other than the scrapie cases mentioned between 1967 and 1972 were ever diagnosed in domestic or wild animals in South Africa.

Kindest regards

Yours sincerely



for The Director: Animal Health

*c:\my documents\usa tse questionnaire.doc*

<b>DEPARTEMENT VAN LANDBOU</b>
DIREKTORAAT DIEREGESONDHEID PRIVAATSAK/PRIVATE BAG X138
<b>1997 -10- 20</b>
PRETORIA 0001 DIRECTORATE OF ANIMAL HEALTH
<b>DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE</b>

## **Annex A**

### **Import conditions for sheep and goats from countries which are not free of scrapie**

Department of Agriculture  
Republic of South Africa

Directorate of Animal Health  
Private Bag X138  
Pretoria  
0001  
Rep of South Africa  
Telephone: +27 (0) 12 3197415  
Fax: +27 (0) 12 3298292

Permit no: 13/1/1/3/.....

Valid from:

Valid to:

### **Veterinary import permit to import sheep/goats into South Africa from .....**

(Issued in terms of the Animal Diseases Act 35 of 1984)

Importer:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Authority is hereby granted to you to import into South Africa ..... from

..... subject to the following conditions:

- I. the consignment must be accompanied by this original permit;
- II. the conditions on the attached health certificate (IMP.OV.CAP.GEN.ZA - JJT3/97) consisting of 2 pages must be complied with and the certificate should be duly signed by an official veterinarian of the exporting country authorised to certify animals for export by the competent veterinary authority of the exporting country;
- III. quarantine must be reserved at an approved quarantine facility in the RSA and all arrangements necessary for the quarantine (as directed by the Director of Animal Health) must be confirmed in writing by all parties concerned;
- IV. the quarantine master at ..... telephone number ..... fax number ..... must be notified timeously before dispatch from the exporting country of the date of arrival of the consignment.
  - A. the consignment may not be landed without his authority
  - B. animals will be in government quarantine for 30 days, during which time laboratory tests will be done, before they are moved to approved scrapie assurance quarantine.
  - C. the quarantine master will make arrangements for the transport of the consignment under official supervision to the approved quarantine facility and animals may not be moved from the port of entry to this facility without his written permission;
- V. the animals are to remain in quarantine for 4 years minimum (which may be extended to five years if deemed necessary by the Director of Animal Health) and may not be lifted without the written permission of the Director of Animal Health.
  - A. During this period no live animals, embryos or semen may be moved from the quarantine unit without the written permission of the Director of Animal Health.
  - B. All animals that die during quarantine must be taken under authority of a veterinary permit to the Onderstepoort research institute, where they will be subjected to post mortem and where brain material will be screened for the presence of scrapie in all cases, at the cost of the importer.
  - C. All animal tissue from deceased animals (including post mortem material described above) and all placentas from new births must be destroyed by incineration. No milk may leave the quarantine unit
  - D. A register of all animals in quarantine, new births and deaths will be kept by the responsible person overseeing the quarantine, and this register will be controlled through head counts by the responsible state veterinarian, who will visit the unit on a regular basis throughout the quarantine period.

Director of Animal Health

Health Certificate (IMP.OV.CAP.GEN.ZA - JJT3/97) for the importation of sheep and goats to  
South Africa

Breed and Species: .....	Exporting Country: .....
Description of the animal(s): .....	Identification mark(s): .....
.....	.....
Competent Authority: .....	RSA Import permit Number: .....
Exporting Country: .....	Means of transportation: .....
	Name of vessel/flight number: .....
Name and Address of the exporter .....	Name and address of consignee: .....
.....	.....
.....	.....

**This certificate must be completed in English**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, an official veterinary officer  
authorised by the competent veterinary authority of \_\_\_\_\_ to certify animals for  
export, hereby certify that the following is true with regards to the animals described above:

**A. HEALTH ATTESTATION**

- 1) The animals were kept in pre-export isolation under official veterinary supervision in facilities officially approved for pre export isolation for a minimum period of 60 days, during which time blood was collected twice not less than 42 days apart and tested the following diseases with negative results:
  - a) Maedi Visna virus (an AGID, ELISA or PCR test)
  - b) Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis virus (an AGID, ELISA or PCR test)

Note: A non-differential test sensitive to Maedi Visna and CAEV would be acceptable.

  - c) Caprine and Ovine Brucellosis (excluding Brucella ovis) - Complement fixation using Brucella abortus antigen.
  - d) Ovine Epididimites (Complement fixation using Brucella ovis antigen)
  - e) Mycoplasma agalactiae (complement fixation)
  - f) Epizootic haemorrhagic disease of deer (Elisa or CFT).
- 2) All animals originate from flocks which has been officially free of the following diseases for the time periods stated in brackets:
  - a) Scrapie (5 years)
  - b) Maedi Visna Virus and Caprine Arthritis Encephalitis Virus (3 years)
  - c) Anthrax (30 days)
  - d) Johne's disease (5 years)
  - e) Tuberculosis (12 months)
  - f) Rabies (6 months)

- 3) The flock of origin's freedom has been proved by a serologic screening test against Johne's disease (consisting of a sample of at least 60 animals above the age of 2 years) with negative results within 12 months of export
- 4) Animals were examined by me not less than 10 days before export and were found to be free of infectious disease and external parasites, including screwworm, sheep mange, scabies and Dermatophilosis. In addition animals were treated under official supervision and before commencement of pre-export isolation with remedies effective against screwworm, all types and stages of internal parasites prevalent on the farms of origin and external parasites found in the areas of origin of the animals  
 Dates of Treatment and remedies used:.....  
 .....  
 .....
- 5) The exporting country meets the OIE code requirements for official freedom of the following diseases:
  - a) Sheep and goat pox
  - b) Surra
  - c) Foot and Mouth disease (all types)
  - d) Rinderpest
  - e) Pestes petits des ruminantes
  - f) Rift valley fever
  - g) Rabies
  - h) Contagious caprine pleuropneumonia
- 6) The animals were treated with a approved drug of the avermectin group within 7 days of export at the dose rate recommended by the manufacturer.

**B. VALIDITY**

This certificate is valid for 10 days from the date of signature.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Official Veterinarian)                      Official Stamp and Date  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Government

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
 (official veterinarian)                      Official stamp

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Name and address of official veterinarian)

## Quarantine guidelines under the South African Scrapie Assurance program

1. Registers and Records
  - a) All animals are to be identified with a fail proof system (i.e a system with backup should the animals lose tags, etc)
  - b) Dates of introduction, deaths, dates of partus, treatment should be in the register.
  - c) Regular inspections with a regular head count will be held on visits by the state veterinarian.
  - d) All deaths will be reported and subjected to full post mortem examinations as required by the permit.
2. Security
  - a) The facility will be surrounded by a double security fence, with a construction suitable to reasonably keep out any unwanted trespassers and prevent any animal from escaping.
  - b) In the case of fenced security fences one of the fences should be electrified.
  - c) Any animals close to lambing will be kept in bird proof areas and afterbirths of animals that lamb during quarantine will be destroyed inside the security area.
  - d) Security guards will be on duty at the unit at all times, thus guaranteeing that the quarantine facilities is not left unattended for the entire quarantine period.
  - e) The quarantine unit may have only one entrance for the full quarantine period. All other entrances to the unit will be locked and sealed at all times.
3. Biosecurity
  - a) No animals (dead or alive) or animal tissues may be removed from the quarantine unit without the permission of the state veterinarian, who will only give permission once arrangements, including control over these for the ultimate destruction of the material has been made.
  - b) There will be no contact with sheep or goats from outside the unit.
  - c) Any animals slaughtered before quarantine has been lifted in 4 to five years will be destroyed by incineration.
  - d) All animals will be subjected to normal government quarantine for 30 days before being moved to the approved scrapie assurance facilities for the 4 to 5 year scrapie quarantine. Whilst in government quarantine animals will be tested as determined by the director animal health for the presence of exotic diseases.